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SETTLEMENT AND TOPOONY IN THE PĂTÂRLAGELE DEPRESSION: THE BUZĂU VALLEY SETTLEMENTS BETWEEN RÂPILE AND ZAHAREȘTI

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Abstract: The Subcarpathians are known as a region that has been well-settled since early times, but it is also evident that many villages arise from the expansion of subsistence farming from the river terraces to the hillsides during a period of acute population pressure and economic restructuring in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This phase of growth is investigated in the context of the Pătârlagele Depression, concentrating on four settlement groups on the eastern side of the Buzău valley: the Măguricea, Râpile, Tega and Zaharești localities; with particular reference to the toponymy presented by large-scale maps and key texts (especially Iorgulescu's epic work of 1892) in addition to the very rich oral evidence. The paper pays attention to both the Buzău terraces and the adjacent landslide surfaces because the latter were also attractive to pioneer peasant farmers on account of their soil fertility and moisture context at a time when the terraces were being used more exclusively for a market economy. Some areas used today for hay, pasture and plum orchards were well cultivated until cereal lands were acquired in the Bărăgan steppe under the 1923 land reform and economic diversification accelerated after 1945. Toponymy is therefore presented as a major source for understanding an important phase of rural settlement. But while the placenames contribute much of interest in terms of ecology and environmental potentials in the light of survival by extended families and other small communities there is little reliable information on the origins of the earlier settlements.

Key Words: *agriculture, colonisation, historical geography, Pătârlagele, rural settlement, Subcarpathians, toponymy.*

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the projects started in the 1990s under a research agreement between the Romanian Academy's Institute of Geography and the Department of Geography at the University of Leicester (UK) concerned the human geography of the Pătârlagele area, having in mind the rural restructuring process (N.Muică & Turnock 1997) and the problematic nature of much of the terrain prone to landslides and mudflows (C.Muică & Bălțeanu 1995; N.Muică & Turnock 1994). Historical investigation into this topic was encouraged by the wider studies in Buzău county (Nancu & Alexandrescu 1993), giving rise to case studies of nineteenth century rural strategies of pluriactivity (N.Muică et al. 2000a, 2000b; N.Muică & Turnock 2000). We have continued our historical research with particular reference to village origins and toponymy and this paper discusses our findings against a background of

knowledge emphasising the historical continuity of relatively dense settlement in the Buzău Subcarpathians as a whole (Petrescu-Burloiu 1977, pp.139–40) although the Pătârlagele Depression was part of the old Saac county before 1845 which implied associations with areas to the southwest i.e. towards Urlați and Vălenii de Munte rather than the lower Buzău valley including Buzău itself. We find that the great majority of settlements date back only to the nineteenth century and also that proof of settlement continuity is extremely sparse for earlier periods (N.Muică & Turnock 2008). The full study area comprises the communes of Pănătău and Pătârlagele, with the latter now an urban area which has always been the centre of the district; comprising not only the Buzău valley but also adjacent Subcarpathian hill country drained by a number of tributary valley including the Pănătău and Sibiciu streams in the eastern side complemented by V.Lupului, V.Muşcelului and V.Viei on the western side (*Figure 1*). The larger settlements occupy the main Buzău corridor system but are complemented by smaller villages and hamlets in the hills endowed their extensive landslide surfaces attractive for small-scale agriculture (though problematic for settlement) and complement the ‘țarină’ lands on the low ground which offer a much better basis for capital investment. This paper deals with the southeastern section of the Pătârlagele Depression study area using oral evidence to supplement the documentary record (*Table 1*). The study area comprises a belt of terraces and hills extending for some five kilometers north-south from Măguricea and Zaharești to Tega and Râpile. On the basis of the settlements officially recognised as basic units for the publication of census data there are actually four units with a total of 17 dependent units. The study begins with a review of the physical landscape and continues with sections covering settlement history and toponomy.

We make extensive use of cartographic evidence. The ‘Harta Topografică’ by Serviciul Geografic al Armatei (1906) – based on 1895-8 data – provides a picture for the end of the nineteenth century while the end of the eighteenth century is covered by Bauer’s ‘Mémoires Historiques’ (1778) and Specht’s ‘Militairische Carte’ (1790-1). Out of a total of 119 settlements throughout the Pătârlagele Depression (including many that are merely neighbourhoods within larger villages) only 41 can be convincingly dated to the eighteenth century or earlier (N.Muică & Turnock 2009) (*Figure 2*). Of course some settlements may well be much older, but a key point is the apparent focus on the lower ground (and especially the Buzău terraces) with only temporary/seasonal use of the higher ground, which could of course include an element of monastic settlement in the form of hermitages that provide a possible origin for Cârnău monastery in the southeastern part of the depression. The latter is known from the sixteenth century along with a cluster the three leading settlements beside the Buzău River: Pătârlagele, Sibiciu de Jos and Sibiciu de Sus. At the same time a comparison can be made between the two halves of the nineteenth century thanks to the Russian map or ‘Harta Rusă/Rusească’ of 1853 (Anon 1853). It is evident that the study area maintained a share of about 14%

of the total population of the Depression during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries working in the basis of both households (1831-1912) and total population (1912-66). Since 1966 depopulation combined with growth in Pătârlagele has now reduced the share to below eight percent.

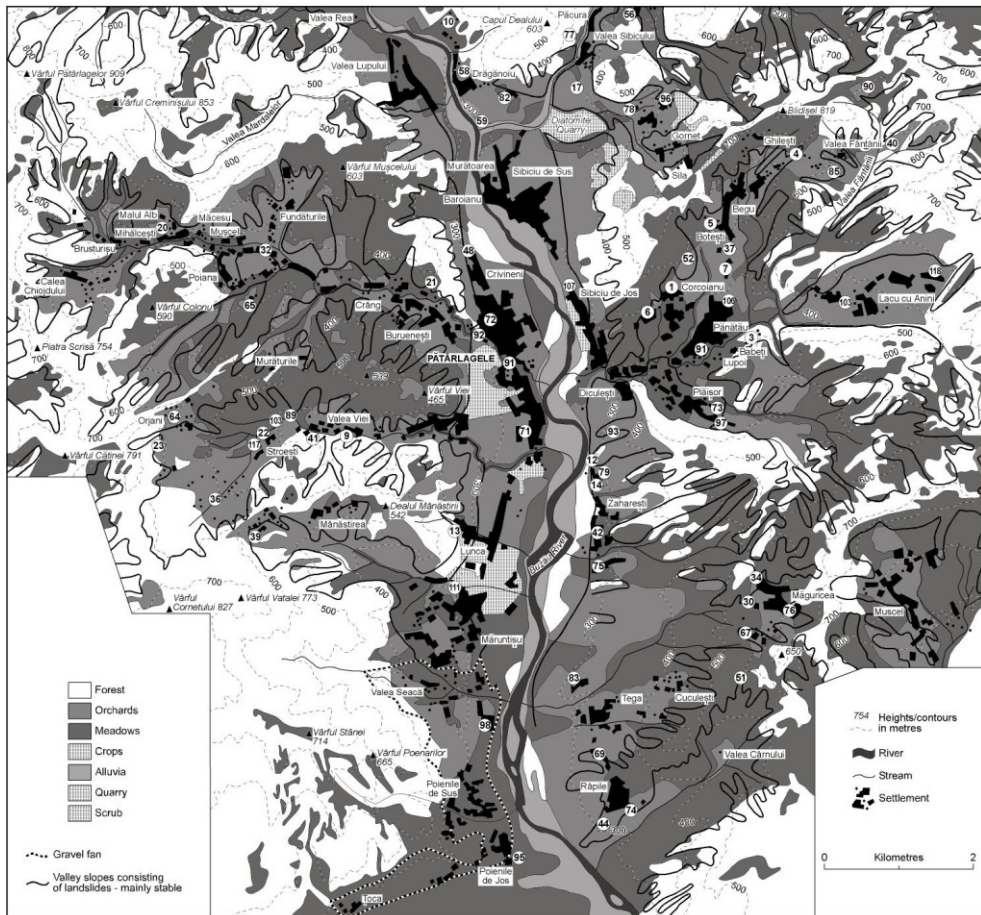


Figure 1: *Topography of the Pătârlagele Depression*

The officially-recognised settlements are basically Class Three, but Class Four where there is a history of commune status (Tega). The dependants are generally Class One (1a for a detached settlement, 1b for a quarter of a larger settlement), but Class Two where there is a history of official recognition prior to 1948 (2a) or 1876-81 (2b). An asterisk denotes a former settlement site now deserted. The prefix numbers relate to locations shown on Figure 2. Square brackets contain alternative names for some of the settlements which round brackets are dependants of the preceding Class 2 settlement. Primary settlements (in existence by 1800) are shown in bold. Those underlined are

dated to the early nineteenth century and those shown in italic date to the twentieth century – the others date to the late nineteenth century.

Sources: Anon 1892 (for 1831-2 data) and census data 1912-2002. Household data is also available through Colescu's census published in 1905 and examined by Baranovsky & Ștefănescu 1965.

Table 1: Population 1832-2002

Main Villages#	1831/2a	1912 a	1912 b	1941 b	1966 b	1966 c	1992 b	2002 b	ndr.
Măguricea	0	48	245	316	335	93.1	177	167	49.4
Râpile	78	81	347	348	343	90.9	175	157	51.5
Tega	24	141	629	732	693	84.6	348	316	51.7
Zaharești	54	80	387	362	308	65.4	206	212	50.1
Total (i)	156	350	1608	1758	1679	84.0	906	852	50.7
Total (ii)	1095	2536	10986	12252	12911	65.4	11778	11179	51.2
Percent (i)/(ii)	14.2	13.8	14.6	14.3	13.0	n.a.	7.8	7.6	n.a.

a households; *b* total population; *c* employment in agriculture (percent). For gender the figures are the female percentages (taking the average for 1912, 1930, 1941, 1956, 1966, 1977, 1992 and 2002). The totals relate to (i) the study area and (ii) the entire Pătârlagele Depression.

denotes the villages which have official recognition today as components of Pănăltău commune. Dependent hamlets are listed as follows:

MĂGURICEA Class 3: 30-Dubrovești Class 1a*; 34-Gorlani (34) Class 1b; 67-Panaieți Class 1b; 76-Pe Pisc Class 1b.

RÂPILE Class 3: 44-Luntrari Class 1b; 69-Pâslari Class 1b; 74-Pe Față [Fața Râpilor] Class 1b; 95-Redeni [Redeny, Redenești] Class 1a*.

TEGA [Prăvățești, Tega-Prăvățești] Class 4: 27-Cuculești Class 2a; 51-Mănăstirea Cârnu [Cârnu] Class 1a; 83-Poduri (83) Class 1a; 109-Valea Cârului (109) Class 2b*.

ZAHAREȘTI [Tega] Class 3: 12-Bejani (12) Class 1b; 14-Bogdănești Class 1b; 42-Linie [Linia, La Linie] Class 1b; 75-Pe Muchie (75) Class 1b; 79-Peste Izvor Class 1a; 93-Racos Class 1a*

II. THE LOCAL TERRAIN

In this brief survey, which covers the Pătârlagele Depression as a whole, we emphasise that our area falls within a zone of depressions and rolling hills at 300-900m, with a complex geology embracing Miocene and Pliocene rocks that vary greatly in their resistance to erosion: ranging from clays and marls to limestones and sandstones. The landscape is remarkably youthful because of the vertical uplift of about 1,000m during the Quaternary which continues today at the modest rate of 0.5-1.5mm per annum. Rivers have become ever more deeply incised in an area of steeply-inclined (sometimes near-vertical) strata, while valley deepening also results in a massive and continuing transfer of material from the slopes to the channels. Indeed, mass movement occurs throughout the extensive 'flysch zone' of the Carpathians, given the great instability arising from lithological variety as well as tectonic and structural fragmentation conducive to a dense river network. Sedimentary rocks include clays, marls, sands and gravels intercalated with more resistant cemented rocks: sandstone (calcareous, silicious or otherwise depending on the binding material), limestone, gypsum and even conglomerate. Level ground is to be

found on the Buzău alluvial lands comprising well-developed terrace systems appearing as steps beginning just 3.0-4.0m above the floodplain; complemented by fragments of mature relief on the higher ground as well as unstable landslide surfaces comprising many of the hillslopes. The fossil soils of the former (e.g. brown soils found on sands, sandstone and young rendzinas) and the more immature but moist soils of the latter support pastures and hayfields today.

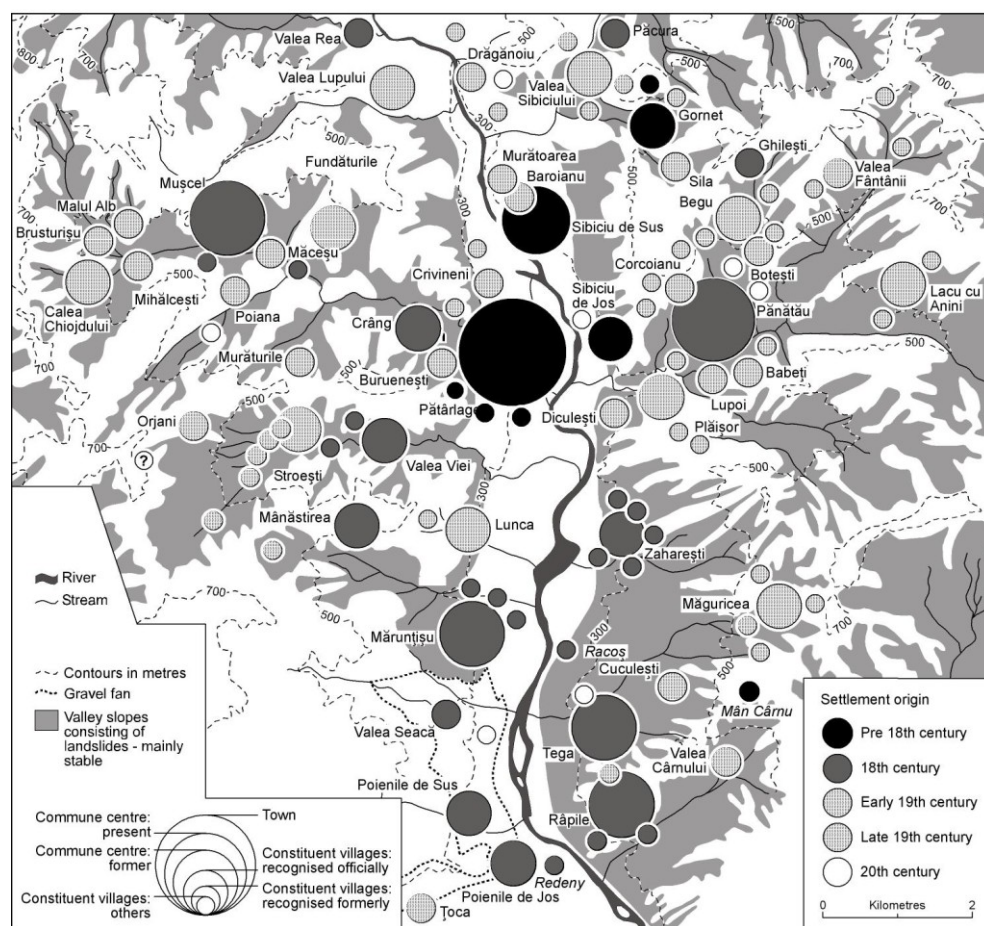


Figure 2: Settlements of the Pătârlagele Depression

Class One/Two settlements are identifiable by the numbers shown in Table 1. For settlements outside the study area the key is as follows (upper case for Class 2): 1 Arvunești; 2 BABEȚI; 3 Băcioi; 4 Băia; 5 Băicuș; 6 Băjăni; 7 Balea; 8 Baroianu; 9 Bărbulești; 10 Bășcureț; 13 Benga; 15 Botești; 17 Burdușoia; 16 BRUSTURIȘU; 18 BURUENEȘTI; 20 Cătușul Bisericii; 21 Cetate; 22 Chelărești; 23 Copăcelul; 24 CORCOIANU; 26 CRIVINENI; 28 DICULEȘTI; 29 DRĂGĂNOI; 32 Gârlă; 33 GHILEȘTI; 36 Ivănești; 37 La Cătină; 39 La Mănăstire în Țigănie; 40 La Oda; 41 Lemnărești; 45 LUPOI; 46 MĂCEȘU; 48 Malul Alb; 49 MALUL ALB; 52 Mărăcineni; 54 Măruntșu Jitianu; 55

Mărunțișu Sibiesc; 56 Mățara; 57 MIHĂLCEȘTI; 58 Mlăcile; 59 Moara Sibicianului; 60 MURĂTOAREA; 61 MURĂTURILE; 62 Murea; 64 ORJANI; 65 Păcle; 66 PĂCURA; 71 PĂTÂRLAGELE DE JOS; 72 PĂTÂRLAGELE DE SUS; 73 Pe Crivină; 77 Peste Gârlă; 78 Peste Izvor; 81 Podosu; 82 Podul Viei; 84 POIANA; 85 Poiana; 89 Potorăști; 90 Predeal; 91 Pripor; 92 Prundeni; 95 Redeny; 96 Robu; 97 Rotărie; 98 Satu Nou; 101 SILA; 102 Slabi; 103 Șoghiorani; 106 Țarină; 107 Țarină de-din Jos; 108 ȚOCA; 110 VALEA FÂNTÂNII; 111 Valea Gornetului; 113 VALEA REA; 114 VALEA SEACĂ; 117 Vasiloi; 118 Vlăicești.

The natural vegetation is beech ('fag') woodland on north-facing slopes and 'gorun' (*Quercus petraea*) on south-facing slopes: since these trees are close to their respective limits at Pătârlagele the contrast arising from aspect is greatly accentuated. But well-drained land attracting strong sunlight is likely to support a local silvosteppe vegetation. The area was once covered with a multi-layered deciduous mesophile forest: an ecosystem of great stability and productivity, capable of efficiently protecting the soil against sheet wash and ensure a certain discharge-to-infiltration balance. Meanwhile on lower altitude sunny slopes it was the durmast that prevailed while on shaded slopes above 700m there was beech forest (occasionally mixed with durmast). In addition some xerophytic elements – pubescent oak and manna ash – were once present on sunny slopes. Today the forest is often young, implying the clearance of natural woodland: beech climax on north-facing slopes, and oak/durmast on south-facing slopes; along with some *Fraxinus ornus*, *Quercus pubescens* and *Ulmus*. There have been some attempts to introduce pine because of its commercial value (also birch and poplar) beneath the beech as part of a species change strategy, but results have not been too good because of salt in the marl – and also drought on sandy land. Because of the salt content, the stone and sand loses part of its value as construction material. However, the beech is now more highly valued commercially for use at the Nehoiu sawmill and a slow transition to beech and oak may be expected if there is no further interference.

However today the fossil soils of the mature relief (brown soils found on sands, sandstone and young rendzinas) and the more immature but moist soils of the landslides support pastures and hayfields today. Meanwhile although the sands yield a thin soil, there is some amelioration through material in suspension: hence the alluvial deposits on top of vertical sandstone/sand deposits on the riverbanks around Pănătău. The result is acceptable cereal land, especially in the case of two extensive terraces at Pătârlagele. Since the valley land is used as intensively as possible for crops, haymaking is restricted and 'fân de lunca' which has to be supplemented by 'fân de deal' although the latter is tougher and of generally poorer quality. Meanwhile some woodland may be present on the floodplain as 'zăvoi' including species such as poplar and willow. Traditionally, torrential rain and heavy run-off has provoked major flooding causing damage to the infrastructure and to cropland that may be covered by a thick layer of sand and gravel. Fortunately these risks have been reduced by the Siriu barrage and similar works in the Bâsca catchment, linked with the

generation of hydroelectricity, but the higher ground remains unstable and well over half the sloping land may be prone to landslides and mudflows (especially where hills are developed on clays and marls). Mean discharge in the Buzău Subcarpathians is 13t/ha/yr; but rates of over 50 have been recorded. Pine trees, along with acacia, ash, buckthorn (also alder on landslides where there is sandy material) help to maintain stability (C.Muică et al. 1993, p.142).

II.1. Hillside remnants of old Relief

This paragraph deals with the highest ground with fragments of an old mature relief linked representing peneplanation associated with the high terreces of the Buzău and other rivers cutting across geological layers of varied resistance and inclination, even including some in a vertical position. There are some ‘poduri’ (terraces) or ‘suprafete domoale’ (almost level surfaces) isolated as at Blidișel and Cp.Dealului (north of Sibiciu de Sus) and at Seciu above Râpile on the eastern side. Hill slopes (‘povarnișurile dealurilor’) extending from the hill summits to the valleys are very varied and some are quite precipitous (‘povarnișuri repezi’). The hills east of the Buzău (north of Zaharești and east of Valea Fântâniei) are typical cuervas with a steep north and northwest (‘dos’) slope to the north – e.g. D. Pănătăului/Plăișorului – with a 12-15deg. structural surface (‘față’) to the south and southeast. Some slopes are steep in the upper part (due to erosion) and yet grade into a fan of deposited material lower down. Young soils (even bare rocks) on the slopes therefore contrast with mature/fossil soils on the surfaces associated with old relief. But aspect is also important because it is quite common to see north-facing cuervas displaying contrasting land uses: forest to the north and agriculture, pasture and fruit trees to the south. The wind is channelled down the valley so that trees are slightly inclined in this direction (though the circulation may be diverted due to currents). Where the ridge is forested on both sides it is likely that there will be oak to the south and beech to the north; also beech above oak following the system of altitudinal layers (although beech is found below the oak at the foot of the southern slope in a narrow valley which is heavily shaded and therefore cold). A good example of old relief is Presvale near Râpile with steps occurring consistently through the 500-650m band. Here the layers are vertical whereas on Seciu hill nearby the surface coincides with the disposition of the geological strata inclining gently to the west. Meanwhile at the very highest level on Blidișel there is a little horizontal surface cutting into layers (of varied resistance) inclined to south with a 25-30deg. slope. Economic significance is demonstrated by the names indicating agricultural use (discussed below);

Agriculture used structural surfaces in the past and there are many surviving agro-terraces (while landslides tend to occur on the more humid soils lower down) with the best examples occurring at Poduri above Corcoianu and Luncă near Begu with maize still grown in the vicinity. The dry thin soils are generally marginalised today with *Chrysopogon gyllus* or ‘sadină’ is an indicator of land that has not been used for

agriculture for a long time. Meanwhile good grassland is to be found especially on the dark pseudo-rendzina soils derived from marl and on the more stable surfaces where a transition to brown soils can be found; while by contrast a hard vegetation – typically grass with woody roots (used by Roma for brushes) – occupies the salty land: Thus the net result of human interventions is a ‘crâng’ landscape of small plantations interspersed with grazings compared with denser, more continuous ‘codru’ forest. C.Muică et al. (1993, p.137) underline the reality of ‘the mosaic-like Subcarpathian landscape [which] facilitated a multitude of soil uses’ as forest was greatly reduced. This new mosaic pattern reflects the main scarp and dip slope features linked with a succession of *cuestas* – with woodland and agriculture – further differentiated by scarps and terraces on the dip slope giving rise to small areas of woodland, with orchards, grazings and hayfields. There may be an alternation of sandstone and marl outcrops across a sloping surface: introducing a corrugated pattern with minor *cuestas* and contrasting landuses of woodland/scrub and pasture.

II.2. The Landslides

The unstable terrain shown in Figure 1 is a feature of the Curvature Subcarpathians as a whole wherever four to five degree slopes occur and much emphasis must be given to landslides (‘*pornituri*’) which are very characteristic of the Curvature Carpathians with much instability especially where Pliocene clay and marl can slip on underlying Miocene sandstone. Despite the agricultural potential the landslides have always posed risks for settlement. And these hazards have become more significant today in the context of increasing investment in housing and infrastructure (Bogdan & Bălteanu 1986). By contrast where marl outcrops between vertical sandstone strata mudflows often occur: they tend to break out after heavy rainfall in spring when the stability arising from winter freeze has been lost. They move downhill like glaciers at rates of up to 20-40m daily. Both landslides and mudflows occur are almost impossible to control, given the complex geology and the instability arising from the continuing tectonic activity (Muică & Zăvoianu 1996, p.210). They are basically natural: a response to downcutting by the Buzău River, possibly coupled with tectonic uplift. A tree cover may make for greater stability but it cannot prevent readjustment permanently. Indeed, mass movement has been occurring for 2000-5000 years at least, though many landslides have been stable for a long time – even since prehistory, as indicated by the extent of soil development. However landslide material varies considerably in character. The main ingredients are clay, marl and sandstone, but the proportions vary as does the amount of lubrication (for heavy rain may well provoke sudden changes in the speed of advance), while fragments of hard rock may be occasionally predominate. The depth of the landslides varies considerably: most are quite shallow (0.4-0.8m) – typically on the steeper slopes – but some reach as much as 10.0m and occasionally 20m. The shallower landslides tend to be the more extensive: emanating from amphitheatres (formed by partial slumping of

the hillside) to occupy as much as two-thirds of a hillslope. As material is torn away to form a landslide source area a quite large steep-sided 'detachment cup' may be created to resemble a glacial cirque.

Clearly stable landslides have great significance for agriculture because although sliding interrupts soil formation fertility and moisture content is enhanced by mixing linked with a natural 'churning' process. After major landslide activity, the soil develops relatively quickly (faster on sands and sandstones than on marls) because the water washes out the salt and creates a good agricultural soil. The peasant's eye will select the most suitable of the gentler slopes that may be cleared for grazings and orchards (the latter often established at the lower end of landslides) and there may also be fans of alluvial material where minor tributaries change course through landsliding and the old course can be used for fruit trees. The lack of extensive smooth surfaces with easy access – so important for commercial agriculture – is no great handicap for subsistence farming when people are able to live in close proximity. And since they offer moisture retention (particularly valuable during dry periods) and remove salt from the soil, even the shallowest landslide tongues ('limbi de pornituri') have been widely used for crops in contrast to the pasture and forest prevailing elsewhere. Haymaking and fruit growing are prominent while (crucially in an age of subsistence) maize grew well on reasonably mature landslides, though less well on the hill with thin soil on the impermeable marl. Given the agricultural potential along with access to woodland and grazing it is conceivable that these surfaces were exploited during the period of Cuman-Petcheneg pressure. But there is no evidence of this and all the indications suggest nineteenth century exploitation when whole settlements were driven on to these surfaces: Măguricea is a good example from our study area but Lacu cu Anini and Valea Fânâniilor lie further to the north while examples on the western side of the Buzău valley include Calea Chiojdului, Fundăturile, Mânăstirea, Orjani and Stroești. The dangers were considerable since houses on landslides may eventually be undermined (say once each century). Still today, the risk of renewed instability can never be overlooked and in many areas it may well be prudent now to restrict agriculture to grazing and haymaking. Meanwhile, mudflows may stabilise and support a grass cover, although it is not good for hay because the surface is so rough the grass is difficult to cut. The ground is also very humid and may have a high salt/sulphate content. So the land is best used for grazing.

II.3. A summary of Land Potential

From the mosaic-like distribution of soil types, reflecting the complex geology with varied structural characteristics and lithological sequences, it is possible to recognise five levels of natural potential for agriculture across the Pătârlagele Depression as a whole (*Table 2*). This picture arose out of a major terrain mapping exercise carried out by the Romanian Academy's Geography Institute during 1977-9

(C.Muică et al. 1979; N.Muică et al. 1981). The very good land clearly comprises the Buzău terraces while the poorest land involves the most heavily degraded areas as well as predominantly wet ground beside the various watercourses, along with the rocky summits and the very salty areas. The intermediate categories cover the landslides and the smoother structural surfaces with the varying potentials contributing to the ‘mosaic’ character of the landuse according to the steepness of the slopes, the degree of stability and the quality of the soil. It is clearly important that farmers should carry out their activities with these varied potentials in mind and agricultural advisers are needed to help farmers consider the possibilities.

Table 2: *Natural potential of the land (Source N.Muică et al. 1981).*

VERY GOOD (7.3%): Areas with insignificant degradation: stable ground with slopes of less than five percent; suitable for multiple uses (agriculture, settlements and communications).
GOOD (20.4%): Areas with insignificant degradation: gently sloping land including structural surfaces; also stable landslides with mature soil: suitable for crops, pasture and meadow.
AVERAGE (50.3%): Areas of moderate degradation: higher ground and medium/steep slopes with podsolised brown soils and acid brown soils mainly used for agriculture (crops, hay and orchards); also stable landslides with a woodland cover.
POOR (7.8%): Areas of significant degradation: steeply-sloping land with eroded soils and bare rock; typically invaded by brambles (‘mărăcinișuri’); also alluvial lands regularly flooded and used only for grazing and scrub.
VERY POOR (14.2%): Areas very heavily degraded: very steep slopes with immature soils and rocks; also with erosion and mass-movement affecting valleys and cuestas; eroded lands with plantations; former quarries; and mobile alluvium on the plain.

III. SETTLEMENT HISTORY

Our research has revealed an important distinction between a relatively old settlement pattern consisting of places established by 1800 and a very extensive secondary settlement – developing mostly in the nineteenth century – when population was increasing and the estate owners were trying to use more of the fertile terraces to produce for the market. They established new settlements for their ‘clăcași’ tenants (feudal dependants) while free ‘moșneni’ households (some of them ‘Ungureni’ from Transylvania) were also occupying the marginal land previously used on a predominantly ‘conac’ basis for grazing and woodcutting. We have H.Constantinescu (1967, p.90) on the Cârnu saga through the foundation of the monastery in 1536 by ‘hospodar’ Mircea Ciobanu and his wife Chiajna; although their marriage did not take place until 1546 and therefore a modified scenario of construction during c.1559-68 by Doamna Chiajna and her son Petru (or relatives) seems more plausible. Given the comparison made between the Buzău Mountains and the Greek monastic complex of Mount Athos concerning the proliferation of hermitages. The idea is put forward speculatively by Burlacu (1979) and it is quite possible that there was a basic cell at Cârnu – a ‘sihăstrie’ with a wooden church – existing from the fifteenth century or earlier, though this can only be a speculation. However, early documentary evidence for other settlements

is elusive. Râpile has a commanding position and could well be very old. Excepting the hill villages that are demonstrably quite recent it is the only settlement (apart from Ghilesti and Gornet lying just to the north of our area) that is well-established and clearly sited with security in mind. Yet there is no proof of existence before the late eighteenth century and while Petrescu-Burloiu (1977, fig 45) claims a fifteenth century origin he provides no evidence: he may be confusing the village with Carnu, although even in this case a fifteenth century origin is not established. Indeed, apart from Carnu the only early documentation relates to Zaharești (originally Tega) but it does not point clearly to a village: in 1534 the reference is specifically to 'muntele și cheamă Tega' i.e. the name of the mountain is Tega (Roller et al. 1951 pp.165-6) – clearly no reference to a village but rather an estate; while in 1584 we have the words 'pentru Pătârlage și pentru Tega' (Ibid, 160-70) which is most unclear as regards the existence of a settlement.

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries are well-documented through the cartographic work of Bauer (1778) and Specht (1790-1) already noted; along with the evidence relating to a remarkable phase of church building during what was evidently a period of relative affluence with population growth combined with a national and religious revival. At Zaharești the church of 1760 also provides an eighteenth century date for the central quarters of Bejani, Pe Michie and Peste Izvor (while Bogdănești and Linie came later). We also have Specht's reference to 'Tega', as Zaharești was known at the time. Meanwhile at Râpile (including Luntrari and Pe Față quarters at the southern end) – despite the lack of any explicit mention of the village before 1818-9 (while the first church is dated 1839) – there is a location on the Specht map of 1790-1 (albeit with no name) and we are also impressed by the large population present at Râpile in 1831-2 – 105 families, eminently comparable with the 106 noted for Pătârlagele de Jos/Sus and 115 for Sibiciu de Jos/Sus (Anon 1892) – suggesting a well-established community. Tega's church was built in 1839 but this evidence is pre-dated by Specht's reference to 'Prowoiczesti' while the virtually similar 'Provoizestie' appears in 1790. In conclusion, we have a 'primary' network that includes Mănăstirea Carnu, Tega, Râpile and Zaharești, with some dependent quarters. But there are also references to several settlements close to the Buzău/Bâsca Chiojdului confluence that have now disappeared. The 'lost village' of Racos is shown between Tega and Zaharești on the maps of two foreign cartographers: Dirvaldt (1810) and Ruhedorf (1788). But there is no trace of this village and no historical record and so we believe that Racos never existed and its brief appearance in documents through two foreign maps may be the result of a mistake by the first cartographer being repeated by the second.

However there is another settlement known as Redeny lying between Râpile and Gura Bâscii, which comes up seven times between 1774 and 1797 (though not on Specht's map) with four further references during 1809-28 using a range of other names (Redeni, Radenesti, Redenesi, Redenesti and Rednești) but always with a location at the Buzău-Bâsca Chiojdului confluence. It is possible that

Redeny could have been abandoned in a flood (given its vulnerability at a major confluence) and rebuilt higher up as Gura Bâscii/Poienile de Jos. Furthermore several maps at this time also mention a third ‘lost’ settlement – Nikova – lying on the southern edge of our area which could relate to the hill of Nicovanu shown in a map of 1812 and again as Nicoveanu in a large scale map of 1900. It again highlights the nodality of the river confluence which evidently attracted settlement to sites vulnerable to flood and historically there has been a tension between this area (administered from Cislău) and Pătărlagele which gains nodality through a bunch of tributaries including the Mușcel, Pănătău and Sibiciu streams. The point also has significance in the context of the historic county of Saac which was eventually divided in 1845 between Buzău and Prahova. With a caput at Văleni (i.e. Vălenii de Munte), Saac included the upper Buzău valley (from a boundary between Magură and Viperești). In this context it is significant that the Dirvaldt map appears to show a major route from Ploiești running north to the frontier via Văleni at a time before the Prahova valley was widely used. But there is another route (lying further to the east) that appears to enter the hill country between Ploiești and Buzău; passing along the east side of the Cricov valley to cross the Buzău river on a southwest-northeast alignment at Nikova which is actually portrayed as a place of some nodality in contrast to Cislău.

III.1. The Secondary Phase: 1800-1945

There was evidently an explosion of settlement in the nineteenth century on the basis of a comparison between the Bauer/Speccht sources and the first Romanian topographical map of 1906 (based on data collected during 1895-8). In addition the remarkably detailed Russian Map (‘Harta Rusă/Ruseacă’) (Anon 1853) allows us to discriminate between the earlier and later parts of the century. In the Pătărlagele Depression as a whole we have 119 settlements of which only 43 settlements were visible by 1800: another 32 date to the first half of the century and 37 to the second, with just seven new settlements following in the whole of the twentieth century. In the much smaller study area considered in this paper we have 11 primary settlements and the same number of secondary settlements of which eight appear to date to the late nineteenth century (while two are earlier and one later). There was clearly a rapid growth of population taking place involving both dependent ‘clăcași’ and free ‘moșneni’ communities (*Table 1*). First we have statistics relating to the number of families in 1831-2 (Anon 1892) which can be compared with Colescu’s data of 1899 (published in 1905 and mapped by Baranovsky & Ștefănescu in 1965) and more particularly the first official census of 1912 which produced figures for both households and total population. These figures indicate that families increased from 1,095 (the average for 1831 and 1832) to 2,536 in 1912 1899, while the study area figures were 156 and 350 (accounting for about 14% in both cases). Total population is known from 1912: 1,608, with growth to 1,758 in 1941 before a reduction to 1,679 in

1966 and (more substantially) to 852 in 2002. In percentage terms the share of 13-14% was maintained until 1966, after which time the subsistence value of the landslide surfaces declined sharply.

The new settlements in the hills seem to have been less nucleated because clearly the priority was not the growth of central places but the needs of subsistence farmers seeking a niche in the age of capitalism – typically in relatively remote areas on landslides as well as fragments of ‘mature landscape’ on the higher ground. Indeed we would underline the quite remarkable situation in which the hillslopes – extensively covered with relatively fertile landslide material – offered much support to scattered subsistence communities comprising the core of an alternative socio-economic system to the emerging capitalism of the central zone supported by the rich agriculture of the Buzău terraces as well as a modern infrastructure based on road and rail communications along the main valley contrasting with the crude ‘drumurile accidentate’ (Petrescu-Burloiu 1977, p.146) on the higher ground, with erosion increased by deforestation that restricted woodland to the steepest slopes, as noted by N.A.Constantinescu (1938). This centre-periphery dualism would have been accentuated following the abolition of feudalism, leaving estate owners free to concentrate on commercial farming on the river terraces while much of the subsistence farming was transferred to the landslides. Although relatively remote and inherently unstable, intensive use of the hills was certainly maintained until alternative cereal lands were allocated in the Bărgăan as part of the 1923 land reform; continuing on a considerable scale until the collectivisation in the 1960s brought a measure of resettlement. Unfortunately, very little documentation is available to expand and illustrate this scenario of settlement advance and retreat over a relatively short period of time.

Of course we are not suggesting a clear watershed in 1800 between the primary and secondary phases of settlement. Petrescu-Burloiu (1977, p.145) refers to a seventeenth-nineteenth century expansion of agricultural land at the expense of woodland; guided by the potentials for settlement in an age of population growth boosted by Habsburg mercantilism in the imperial borderlands as ‘Ungureni’ immigrants were able to negotiate a stake in ‘moşneni’ landholding and either join existing communities or establish new settlements in the hills as part of the ongoing process of ‘roirile pastorale’. The nineteenth century trend is therefore an acceleration of what has been noted for the eighteenth century but with permanent settlement in landslide areas much more accentuated through fragmented settlement outside the main villages. All over the hills it seems that new land was being broken up as ‘mosaics’ of mixed agricultural activity extended across the landslide tongues that had previously seen only grazing and haymaking on the ‘conac’ model without the subsistence crops, plum trees and permanent settlements as subsistence farmers sought a niche in the age of capitalism.

Few developments are clearly documented but Cârnul monastery evidently settled ‘clăcaşi’ tenants on landslides at Valea Cârnului and also had an interest in

similar surfaces worked by peasants at Măguricea where permanent settlement began at Dubrovești (shown on the Russian map) before expanding at the present Măguricea site by 1860 where a 'boiar' named Angelescu became involved in a land dispute with the monastery: indeed Iorgulescu (1892, pp.316-7) confirms that two landowners were involved. One of today's inhabitants (C.Stelică), who considers himself a fourth generation descendant of the original settlers, embellishes the 1864 reform (abolishing feudalism) and the subsequent award of monastic grazing and woodland with the legend of Prince Cuza's overnight visit to the village after being refused shelter at the monastery when he arrived there in disguise. Other new settlements dating to this period included Cuculești near Tega and new quarters at both Râpile and Zaharești. However services remained in the established villages (Damé 1894) with churches at Râpile, Tega and Zaharești; followed by schools at Tega and Zaharești in the nineteenth century (also Râpile in the inter-war period – although the school closed in 2003) while occasional fairs were held at Zaharești. However an inter-war church project was brought to fruition at Măguricea in 1946. Meanwhile Cârnu which, it is claimed, was largely abandoned after Cuza's secularisation policy, the monastery survived and underwent a major refurbishment during 1994-2000 when a large new wing (incorporating a new church) was completed.

IV. TOPONOMY

As regards the settlements in the area, several names relate to families e.g. Bogdănești (Bogdan), Cuculești (Cucu), Dubrovești (Dubreu – from the Bulgarian 'dubrova') and Gorlani (Gorlan), while Luntrari also ties up with the tradition of a river ferry with 'luntre' indicating a wooden boat. Further cases are: Panaieti (Panait), Pâslari – alluding to thick felt arising from the fulling of woollen cloth, Râpile (Râpeanu) and Zaharești (Zaharia) with Tega as a further possibility. Some names may also refer to origins of settlers with Sibiciu (relating to Sibiu) as the most striking case, although Râpile may imply a connection with Rupea which lies northwest of Brașov: however neither association has ever been proved and such interpretations have lost credibility. Meanwhile Prăvătești refers specifically to the people from Prăvat: the old name for Tega (although the word is derived from the Slavonic 'pravie' or 'pravac' and means a road, way or target). Routeways are indicated by Linie: a settlement aligned along a main road. Pe Pisc is linked with a Slavonic word meaning a muzzle. Bejani could relate to fugitives or rather settlers who arrived as fugitives: providing another hint of migration from Transylvania to escape from Hungarian rule. But there is also a physical component for Măguricea is a diminutive of 'măgură' meaning an isolated hill while Pe Muchie is a hill summit (after the Latin 'mutulus') and Râpile (indeed Tega as well) could refer to the steep escarpment on which the village stands. Pe Față refers to a south-facing slope while the 'pod' element in Poduri refers to a high, flat surface. Finally, Cârnu is an interesting case which emerges through both Mănăstirea Cârnu and Valea Cârnelui, though it may originate in the physical

landscape through ‘Muncelul Cârnelui’, referring to a person without a nose. Indeed it is curious that another name in the area points to disfigurement: Dl.Ciulului: alluding to a person with one ear - referring to a person with one ear! History suggests that a prominent person (‘hospodar’ or prince) may have been maimed by a rival for the throne since tradition required that (except in the case of battle wounds) only a person without disfigurement could rule.

IV.1. Other placenames: sources and interpretation

A total 110 named features have been noted in the study area of which 41 have no documentation and are known only from oral evidence while 69 have some documentation (which also being generally known among the present population): 35 have a single documentary reference, 26 have two to four references and only eight have more. The latter are: V.Cuculeștilor with five, I.Chiliei and Dl.Seciului with six, Dl.Cârnelui and Mu.Chiliei with seven, V.Cârnelui has eight, V.Lazului has nine and Dl/Pd/Vf.Baidea with 10. As regards the documentary sources a total of 165 references is generated by 16 sources generate which are particularly valuable when the sources are cartographic because the location is precise and only a few problems arise over accuracy e.g. Mu.Builă/Burilă is shown 0.2km south of Cuculești in 1961 but to the northeast in 1900. 35 sources each come from the 1900 provisional 1:50,000 map by Institutul Geografic al Armatei and from Iorgulescu’s book of 1892. There are 22 from the 1:25,000 topographical map of 1961 by Ministerul Forțelor Armate (Direcția Topografică Militară) and 21 from the 1980 edition. All the other sources are in single figures: nine from the N.Muica (1977) paper; seven from the Romanian 1:100,000 topographical map of 1916 by Serviciul Geografic al Armatei, six each from Iorgulescu’s work of 1881, the 1912 ‘Dicționar’ by Ministerul Agriculturii și Domeniilor (published in 1914) and the 1:100,000 topographical map by Institutul Geografic Militar (1941). Five each come from the 1:100,000 topographical map of 1906 (with 1895-8 data) by Institutul Geografic al Armatei and the Bălțeanu paper of 1983; while there are three from documentary material from 1583 written up by N.A.Constantinescu (1941, pp.1-2); two from the Szathmary ‘Charta Romanie Meridionale’ of 1864 (based on Fligely’s surveys of the late 1850s); and one each from an observation of 1746 (Berechet 1918), the 1874 (the Austrian ‘General Karte’: a topographical map of Europe in sections; and the Patrescu-Burloiu’s book of 1977. However only the maps already quoted as principal sources for the study of settlement are listed in the bibliography.

All the names occur only once in the area apart from Po.Roșu (the red plateau) which appears at both Măguricea and Zaharești; also Saramura (salt water) at Măguricea and Râpile. But a number of features have more than one name which may be expected when they concern people in different villages (perhaps on opposite sides of a hill) or even people from different farms e.g. the hill generally referred to as Dl.Bălcioșu (Bălcioșu’s hill) is also known as La Meri-ai Trei (‘at the three apple

trees') used by people on the northern side (Diculești and Plăișor) and Vf.Sinciului (Sinciu's peak) in Zaharești. Names may also follow a historical sequence e.g. an area of old landslides near Tega known as La Berhuleasa i.e. at Berhuleasa's land, but now divided between the hamlet of Poduri and the remaining area of open ground known as Fânețe. I/V.Carnului was also been linked with V.Roghina in 1980 although this was an error because the latter only applies to the upper section of the valley. Likewise I.Chiliei was called V.Nițului in 1961 although the latter is really the name of a tributary. But other cases have no obvious explanation: V.Carului (the valley of the cart), lying south of Măguricea, is also known as V.Lazului (a valley with 'recently' deforested land') and I/V.Teghii (Tega valley); V.Ciocârlanului (Ciocârlan's valley) at Zaharești is also V.Lacului (the valley of the lake); and Pâcle (at Tega) is also known as I.Sărat and I.Glodului – a mud spring with salt and mineral oil. Mu.Pluteanului is also Mu.cu Tei (the summit with a lime tree) and Vf.Cârnelui is also Gogoșu (i.e. 'doughnut peak'). La Cârlig ('at Hook's place': the literal meaning of a family name) is also Ț.Teghii (Tega's 'țarina'). Other variations – e.g. L.Dedului/L.lui Dedu, Vf.Băidea/Boidea and Mu.Builă/Burilă – are relatively trivial and are mentioned further in connection with the documentary evidence below. Finally, a name may be simplified: thus a farm named after the Potop's son (a name which carries the sense of a flood) may be shortened from 'Nule al lui Potop-La' to simply 'La Potop'.

The documentary mentions are sometimes all identical e.g. Mu.Pluteanului (Pluteanu's summit) with two references (1900 and 1980) and several places with three each: V.Chileru (Chileru's brook) and V.Pn.Sinciului (Sinciu's clearing) in 1900, 1961 and 1980; plus Mu.Florii (summit of the flowers) in 1961, 1977 and 1980. But other cases show some variations. Most obvious is the use of the alternative names already referred to. Thus V.Lazului is documented in 1900, 1916 and 1941 along with I/V.Teghii in 1977 and 1980 (but Tega-I in 1892 and I/V.Tega in 1881) and V.Carului in 1961, 1977 and 1980. However some such variations arise from the oral evidence and do not affect the literary record: Dl.Bălcioșu (already mentioned) is used in documents in 1961 – with the variant Vf.Bălcioșu in 1900 – while the local alternatives Vf.Sinciului (Sinciu's peak) at Zaharești and La Meri-ai Trei (at Diculești and Plăișor, outside our area) are not documented. Also V.Lacului is used orally at Zaharești while V.Ciocârlanului is documented in 1900 and 1977 (I/V.Ciocârlanu in 1881). In many other instances the differences are quite small e.g. hill (Dl) usually comes at the end in 1892: hence the five references to Mu.Înalta (the high ridge) for 1892, 1900 1961 1980 1983 are the same apart from 'Înalta-Mu' for the first; likewise for the three references to Po.Roșu (the red plateau) which include Roșu-Po. for 1892. Grammar may be strictly applied so that Dl.Aboraș (the hill of Aboraș) in 1900 becomes Dl.Aborașului in 1961; while I.Cuculeștilor in 1977 is V.Cuculești in 1961 and 1980 (but V.Coculești in 1900 and 1906) and V.Motog in 1900 was Motocului-V. in 1892. 'Valea' (V) may be replaced by Izvor (I) e.g. V.Chiliilor (the valley of the cell) in 1980 was previously quoted as I.Chiliei in 1900 and I.Chilei in 1916 and 1942;

not to mention the error of V.Nițului in 1961 and the words ‘izvor cu apă veșnic curgătoare la poalele chiliei’ attributed to the cleric Paisie Velicicovski in 1746 and quoted by Berechet (1918, p.25). For G.Ștubului (the hollow with a fountain) we have I. Ștubului 1881 and Ștubului-G. in 1892; while Dl.Seciu, which is so documented in 1900 and 1961, becomes Dl.Seciului in 1980 and 1983, merely Seciu in one 1983 variant and also in 1977 when a spot height of 577m is added and finally Seciului-Mu. in 1892; while the mixing of Dl. and Vf. has already been noted in the case Dl.Balcusu/Vf.Băciusu. The sense of being ‘at’ a particular location results in the references of 1881 and 1977 to Muchiuliță – meaning the little hill crest, using the diminutive form of ‘muchie’ – being modified to ‘La Muchiuliță’ in 1900. Similarly V.Roghina in 1980 was Roghini-La in 1892; while V.Ruptura (valley of the tear) – Ruptura-V. in 1892 – is also known locally as Pe Ruptura (‘on recent landslides’). A hill or slope may be combined with woodland so Ds.Muscelului in 1912 was documented as Muscelului-Ds/Pd. in 1892. Variations multiply in the case of Dl.Băidea with a total of ten references because in addition to the alternative name Dl.Boidea used in 1912 and reference to woodland (Pd/Vf/Băidea in 1961) there is alternation between the usual ‘hill’ (Dl) and the peak (Vf) used in 1961 and 1980 (but neither in 1881 and 1983) and also some use of spot heights: 662m in 1906, 1916 and 1941 (to the exclusion of any name) but 681m in 1977. Spelling reforms both in the nineteenth century and the communist period may also be mentioned: thus Dl.Cîrnului in 1961, 1977 and 1980 follows Dl.Cârnelui in 1895, 1900, 1916, 1942 not to mention M/Vf.Carnului in 1892 (similarly V.Cîrnului in 1961 and 1983 after V.Cârnelui in 1900, 1916 and 1941 – but Cârnelui-I. in 1892). V.Crăciunoaia in 1961 and 1980 was V.Crăciunoea in 1900, while V.Geroasa in 1961 and 1980 was V.Gorosa in 1900. Moreover Mu.Chiliei (1900 and 1961) may also be spelt with a ‘K’ so that we have Vf.Kililor in 1874 in addition to Vf.Chillioru in 1864, Chilielor-Vf. in 1892 and Mu.Chiliilor in 1980 (while both Mu.Chiliei and Mu.Chiliilor are cited in 1983) not to mention spot heights of 739m in 1900, 751m in 1961 and 752m 1980 and 1983. Finally, both Pd.Gorâniș and ‘Gorâniș-La (Mociornița)’ were mentioned in 1892

Some names evidently have no meaning in the Romanian language e.g. Aboraș and Bălcușu, probably used respectively as a nickname and personal name. Of course this is hardly an important matter where family and personal names are concerned since any ‘meaning’ will be incidental to the economic and social profiles of the individual people (though nicknames may well highlight some specific characteristic). However when names do have a meaning relevant to the locality they generally make sense. Thus Mu.Înaltă is indeed the high summit or ridge: relating to the highest part of a rocky crest above Cânu monastery. Dl.Malului is certainly a prominent hill with a precipice (and the brook I.Malului is the source of the precipice), while the edge of the precipice is C.Ma.Mare. C.Plaiului is indeed the slope of the ‘plai’ at Cuculești below Dl. Cârnelui, while Lacu-al Mare is a lake on the upper part of old landslides near the Mu.Pluteanului summit above Zaharești. Muchiuliță-La

meaning ‘at the little hill crest’ (using the diminutive form of ‘muchie’ already noted) near Măguricea is appropriate for a narrow summit without any plateau feature; Po.Roșu: the red plateau near Măguricea and also near Zaharești follows from the colour of the rock; Pd.Gorâniș/Gorâniș-La (Mociornița) meaning the durmast forest of *Quercus petraea* relates to a low summit with dry soil which is good for ‘gorun’ in contrast to the damp Mociornița suitable for *Quercus robur*. As a dialectical form of Rovina, V.Roghina/Roghini-La gives the right impression of a valley of wild boar because the landslides offer an almost permanent water supply used by wild boar from the former forest especially during summer drought. However as regards Dl.Pițigoiului – the hill of the titmouse/tomtit – the bird is certainly common in the area although no special connection can be claimed with this particular hill. And ‘Apa Ma.Dârste’ (the brook of Dârste’s precipice) is curious because there is no sign of any water, though perhaps the reference relates to the Buzău river flowing at the foot of the bluff or precipice marking the bank of the river north of Zaharești. Meanwhile, L.Cârnului – referred to in 1892 as a small lake filling a landslide depression – is certainly problematic because the lake no longer exists; likewise V.Lacului – also a former lake in a landslide depression – although there is another lake higher up on the slopes of Blidișel which justifies the name as an alternative to I/V.Ciocârlanului. Again, Dl.Geroasa is the frosty hill (from ‘ger’ meaning frost) but the location is not particularly frosty and it seems that a name broadly applicable to an estate has been appropriated by cartographers specifically for a small hill and valley near Măguricea (likewise V.Geroasa in the same area). Mu.Florii – the summit of the flowers – is actually a former ‘țarina’ on a low hillside covered with old landslides while the term Dl. (normally a hill) may also be used indicate a cropping surface. Pd.Mărului means apple tree forest although it is actually lime trees that are present while the three apple trees associated with the location La Meri-ai Trei no longer exist; just as the service tree (‘scoruș’ i.e. *Sorbus aucuparia*) is absent from the hollow claiming such an association: G.cu Scoruș. Taking the names of some of the smaller streams, I.Butucilor can claim no particular relevance for tree trunks, while I.Chiliei does not really connect with any hermitage cell (though the Vărbila monastic estate maintained a ‘schit’ nearby at Mănăstirea) and reforestation in V.Lazului would not now be recent.

IV.2. Physical Geography

Reviewing the names beginning with the physical geography (Table 3) all prominent hills have their names like Dl.Aborașului near Râpile and Dl.Cârnului at Măguricea with the high part of the summit also known as Gogoșu (meaning a doughnut). Many hills are named after people like the Șelari family at Tega. The names of streams frequently relate to individuals: V.Albului, V.Chilerului, V.Crăciunoaia, V.Motocului and I.Sinciului. But names indicating drainage conditions can be revealing like Mociornița: a wet area with black soil near Râpile, while confluence locations may be highly significant e.g. La Trei Izvoare (‘at the three

brooks’) referring to the confluence of I.Chiliei with its tributaries I.Butucilor and I.Sinciului near Zaharești. Landslides are also interesting on account of their potential for settlement. ‘Waving’ land with small depressions may be highlighted with reference to dishes: hence Blidișei – the plural form of Blidișel meaning bowls or dishes – applies to an area of former hay meadow and pasture south of Zaharești. The same idea emerges in the case of I.Blidarilor (‘the brook of the dishes’) on the northern edge of the same village, while V.Vizuinilor means the valley of the hollow (or burrow) near Tega and V.Ghizuniilor is the valley of the burrows near Tega. Small lakes may accumulate in depressions on landslides e.g. L.Cârnului referred to in 1892 but no longer in existence while L.Sămarului (Sămar’s lake) is known from our oldest references (going back to the sixteenth century) and may have once existed in forest on the edge of our area. Landslides may also contain large boulders: hence Pt.Lată which is the great rock on Mu.Pluteanului (near Zaharești); though the best example is Pt.lui Novac (the stones of Novac): two (formerly three) huge stones named after a giant in Romanian mythology (though sometimes confused with Mihai Viteazu’s Captain Baba Novac). Landslides may also be associated with precipices as they pull away in their source areas: I.La Uluce near Râpile is actually a spring ‘at the groove’ relating to a precipice below Dl.Seciu; likewise Apa Ma.Dârste and I.Malului. There are few references to vegetation and wild life (although V.Ciocârlanului at Zaharești is the valley of the crested/tufted duck) but references to woodland arise through I.Butucilor (‘the brook of the tree trunk’, already noted) east of Zaharești; În Crivina is an area of forest and heath near Zaharești; while Pd.Gorâniș/Gorâniș-La (Mociornița) is indeed the durmast forest of *Quercus petraea*. However the woodland may not be present today, as in the case of the reference to the service tree already noted (G.cu Scoruș) and other references may concern a solitary tree like Mu.cu Tei which is the summit with a lime tree otherwise known as Mu.Pluteanului (Pluteanu’s summit).

Table 3: *Placenames: Physical Features*

<p>MOUNTAINS: Dl.Aborașului: hill of Aboraș; Dl/Vf.Băidea/Boidea: Băidea’s hill/peak; Dl.Balcusu: Balcusu’s hill; Mu.Builă/Burilă: Builă’s/Burilă’s summit; Dl.Cârnului: Câmu hill; Mu.Chiliei: crest of the hermitage cell; Mu.Florii: summit of flowers; Dl. Geroasa: frosty hill; M.Gogoșu: doughnut mountain; Mu.Înaltă: high summit/ridge; Mu. Lazului: deforested summit; Vf.Măguricii: peak of Dl.Măguricea; Dl.Malului: hill of the precipice; Mu.Motocului: Motoc’s summit; Muchiuliță La: at the little hill crest; Mu.Mustoii: summit of Mustoia: a damp place; Dl.Pițigoiului: hill of the titmouse/tomtit; Mu.Pluteanului: Pluteanu’s summit; Po.Roșu: red plateau; Dl.Seciu: deforested hill; Dl.Stupinei: hill of the beehive; Șelari: hill named after the Șelari family; Vf.Stâni: peak of the sheepfold (‘stâna’); Mu.cu Tei: summit with a lime tree; Mu.lui Tudor Vlad: Tudor Vlad’s summit.</p>
<p>PRECIPICES & LANDSLIDE FEATURES: Blidișei: waving land; C.Boldanului: slope of Boldanu; Ma.Dârstei: Dârste’s precipice; Pt.Lată: great rock; Sub Mal: under the precipice; Dl/L.Malului+; C.Ma.Mare: at the edge of the great precipice; Pt.lui Novac: stones of Novac; C.Plaiului: slope of the ‘plai’; Ruptură/În/La/Pc.Rupturi: at/on the tear(s) i.e. recent landslide(s); V.Ruptura: valley of the tears; C.Stânei: at the slope of the sheepfold (stâna); G.Ștubcului: hollow with a fountain.</p>
<p>DRAINAGE: V.Albului: white man’s valley; I.Blidarilor: brook of the dishes; I.Butucilor: brook of the tree trunk; I/V.Cârnului: Câmu valley; L.Cârnului: former Câmu lake; I/V. Chilerului:</p>

Chileru's brook/valley; **I.Chiliei/V.Chiliilor**: spring/valley of the hermitage cell; **V. Ciocârlanului**: valley of the crested/tufted lark; **V.Crăciunoaia**: Crăciunoaia's valley; **Apa Ma.Dârstei**: water/brook of Dârstea's precipice; **V.Fântânei**: brook/valley of the well; **V. Geroasa**: valley of the frost; **V.Ghizuniilor**: valley of the burrows; **V.Lacului**: valley of the lake; **V.Lazului**: valley with 'recently' deforested land; **I.Malului**: brook of the precipice; **V.Motocului**: Motoc's valley; **Mociornița**: wet area with black soil; **Mustoaia**: small valley damp in spring; **V.Roghina/Roghini-La**: small depressions/pools associated with wild boar; **I.Sinciului**: Sinciu's brook; **L.Sămarului**: Sămar's lake; **V.Stupinei**: valley of the bee hive; **I/P/V.Teghii**: Tega valley; **Trei Izvoare-La**: at the three brooks; **V.Vizuinilor**: valley of the hollow/burrow.

PLANTS/WOODLANDS: **Pd.Băidea/Boidea**: Băidea's wood; **I.Butucilor+**; **Pd.Chiliile Schitului**: forest of the hermitage cells; **Crivină-In**: place with heath/forest; **L.Dedului/L.lui Dedu**: Dedu's lake; **Mu.Florii+**; **Pd.Gorâniș/Gorâniș-La (Mociornița)**: evergreen oak forest of Mociornița; **Pd.Mărului**: apple tree forest; **G.cu Scorus**: (a) hollow with service tree; **Mu.cu Tei+**;

BIRDS/ANIMALS: **V.Ciocârlanului+**; **DI.Pițigoiului+**

denotes a name relating to a family or personal name or nickname mentioned in Table 4. + denotes meaning provided elsewhere in the table.

Specific features are abbreviated as follows (using the singular/indefinite article): Arie (A): outdoor threshing floor; Bălcă (B): small water-filled hollow; Cap (Cp): hilltop; Cuib (Cb): nest; Ciuciu (Ci): spring; Coastă (C): hillslope; Cruce (Cr): wayside cross; Culme (Cu): ridge; Deal (Dl): hill; Dos (D): north-facing slope; Depresiune (Dp): depression; Drum (Dr): road; Fag (Fg): beech tree; Fâneată (Fa): hayland; Fântână (Fn): well; Față (F): south-facing slope; Fund (Fd): back side; Gârlă (Gâ): marshy brook; Groapă (G): small hollow; Gură (Gu): mouth of a stream; Hotar (H): boundary; Izvor (I): commonly a spring but often used for a little brook; Lac (L): lake; Laz (Lz): recently deforested area; Luncă (Lu): floodplain; Munte (M): mountain; Mal (Ma): precipice; Moară (Mo): mill; Muchie (Mu): crest; Mușcel (Mș): gentle slope with landslides; Obor (O): cattle farm; Odae (Od): sheep farm; Pădure (Pd): woodland; Pârâu (P): small stream; Piatra (Pt): rock; Pisc (Ps): ridge or peak; Plai (Pl): near-horizontal surface (perhaps with some undulation); Poartă (Pr): gate or entrance; Pod (Po): horizontal surface or a step on a hillside; Poiana (Pn): clearing; Pom (Pm): fruit tree; Pripor (Pp): steep slope; Puț (Pu): well; Râpă (Rp): precipice; Râu (R): river; Ruptură (Ru): tear, occurring in areas with young landslides; Saramură (Sm): salty spring; Stână (Sn): pasture station; Talpă (T): pavement; Țarină (Ț): agricultural land; Vale (V): valley which may be small, with no permanent stream; Vână (Vn): spring but it may also refer to a brook; Vârf (Vf): peak.

IV.3. Human Geography

Turning to the human geography (Table 4), a number of names recall local settlements: particularly Cârnu which attracts a total of 17 references relating to the hill (Dl.Cârnelui) with eight, I/V.Cârnelui with seven as well as F.Cârnelui and L.Cârnelui with one each. Other local settlement names are I.Cuculeștilor for Cuculești spring; Vf.Măguricii for Măguricea peak; the spring I.Pâslarilor (Pâslari spring) which relates one of the quarters of Râpile; I/P/V.Teghii for Tega valley, while there is also a reference Tega in 1583 (although it cannot be linked with the present village with any certainty) and Ț.Teghii (lying to the southwest of the village) is referred to through La Cârlig in 1900. Fâ.Mărunțișenilor, which consists of the former 'țarina' at Poduri near Tega, means the hayland of Mărunțișu people (a community formerly comprising a commune which extended down both sides of the Buzău valley). And there are two settlements outside the area which are recalled: V.Fântânei (the brook or valley of the well, near Râpile) may link with the village of Valea

Fântânii (albeit with a slightly different spelling) while Ds.Muscelului and F.Muscelului (north- and south-facing slopes) relate to the nearby village of Muscelu-Țigan. Many other names relate to people, several of whom have more than one feature named after them like Albu with a clearing and valley near Zaharești; Băidea (or Boidea) relating to high ground on the edge of the area south of Râpile that is documented as woodland as well as a hill and a peak. Also Dl/Ma.Dârste at Zaharești as well as Apa Ma.Dârste which means the brook of Dârste's precipice. Other cases are Motoc at Râpile – through Mu/V.Motocului – and Sinciu at Zaharești through I/V.Pn.Sinciului (the valley of Sinciu's clearing) and Vf.Sinciului (Sinciu's peak). But in only one instance is a name remembered by a present inhabitant: V.Crăciunoaia is the modern equivalent of Crăiunoia – the nickname for woman married to Crăciun – who is remembered by an elderly inhabitant of Zaharești whose parents spoke of a 'boiar' estate involving names such as the 'sfoară' – parcel or plot – of Jitianu (also recalled by the 'clacasi' settlement of Mărunțișu Jitianu); alternatively 'sfoară la lalomiteana' or 'cureaua la Jan' concerning an estate extending from one village to another. Even full names are now forgotten like Mitu Pavel (whose 'arie' is referred to below) and Mu.lui Tudor Vlad at Râpile. Personal names are quite numerous including Balciusu, Dedu. Nitu, Potop, Stornești, Șelari – and some are very old like Băidea (or Boidea). Several are almost certainly nicknames e.g. Aboraș, Cârlig (a hook), Cocenești: from 'cocină' (a pigsty), Sămar and Streaua. And others may arise like Boldanu (used for the steep slope C.Boldanului near Măguricea) and Builă/Burilă (a summit at Cuculești). The derivation of these names is almost always unknown e.g. În Cranț meaning 'at Cranț' would appear to come from the German 'Kranz' but no such connection is now remembered in the Măguricea area.

There are plenty of references to clearings: Pn.Albului (Albu's clearing) above Zaharești, V.Pn.Sinciului for the valley of Sinciu's clearing and Pn.Ulmului (elm clearing) which refers to a solitary elm indicating moist soil on the plateau in the same area. Scrub clearance is clearly indicated by La Cătină Arsă meaning 'at the burnt cătină': an area of poor scrubby pasture near Cuculești. Dl.Seciu – a deforested hill north of Râpile – recalls the process of 'securire': removing a ring of bark from the trunk. 'Seciu' – as in Dl.Seciu northeast of Râpile – is a common name in the Subcarpathians for a deforested hillside and although Candrea (1931, p.1132) considers that the word is derived from Serbo-Croat referring to pasture on land formerly forested. Poienița (a diminutive of 'poiana') is a small clearing below the Cranț peak near Măguricea while 'laz', which also points clearly to deforestation, appears in the area through Mu.Lazului (the deforested summit) and V.Lazului (a deforested valley) as well as several places near Zaharești: Mu.Lazului, În Laz and Sub Laz, where farming is clearly indicated by La Malaia, and În Stupini (see below). Clearances may sometimes be linked with monasticism which is highlighted by Mănăstirea Cârnu along with other monastic estates and legends relating to hermitages. Thus I/V.Chilerului: Chileru's brook (south of Râpile) is probably derived

from ‘chelar’: a person holding the pantry key (Candrea 1931, p.253) which could suggest a link with Cârnău monastery. The same could be said of I.Chiliei or V.Chiliilor near Zaharești: the name means the spring of the cell which is mentioned by the famous cleric Paisie Velicicovski in 1746 with the words ‘izvor cu apă veșnic curgătoare la poelele chiliei’ (Berechet 1918, p.25). We also have Mu.Chiliei – the crest of the cell – on a rocky hilltop near Măguricea: an association with the monk Onufrie. Pd.Chiliile Schitului is the forest of the hermitage cells lying close to the monastery: a former monastic forest, now with a large clearing consisting of scrubby pasture with some relict woodland.

Table 4: *Placenames: Human Geography*

SETTLEMENTS: DI/F/I/L/V.Cârnului# ; I.Cuculeștilor : Cuculești spring; V.Fântânei# ; Vf.Măguricii# ; Fa.Mărunțișenilor : hayland of the Mărunțișlui people; Ds/F.Muscelului : north/south facing slopes of Muscelu-Țigan; I.Pâslarilor : Pâslari spring
PERSONS: DL.Aborășului# ; Pn.Albului : Albu’s clearing; V.Albului# ; A.lui Mitu Pavel-La : at the threshing of Mitu Pavel; DI/Pd/Vf.Băidea/Boidea# ; I.Bâlcii : Bâlca’s spring; DL.Balcusu# ; Berhuleasa-La : at Berhuleasa’s land; C.Boldanului# ; Mu.Builă/Burilă# ; Cârlig-La : at Hook’s place; I/V.Chilerului# ; V.Crăciunoaia# ; În/Pe Crant# ; Apa Ma. Dârstei# ; L.Dedului/ L.lui Dedu# ; La Potop/La Nule al lui Potop : Potop’s son; Mu/V. Motocului# ; I.Nițului : Nițu’s spring; Pt.lui Novac# ; Mu.Pluteanului# ; L.Sămarului# ; H.Sibiești : limit of Sibiești’s land; I.Sinciului# ; Stoenеști-La : on the land of the Stoenеști family; Streaua : Streaua’s land/old estate; Șelari# ; Mu.lui Tudor Vlad#
CROPS/FRUIT: A.lui Mitu Pavel-La ; A.Pe Muchie-La : at the threshing on the summit; La Mălăe-La/Mălăele : at the maize; La Merii-ai Trei : at the three apple trees; Ț.Teghii : ‘țarină’ of Tega; La Vii : at the vineyard.
LIVESTOCK/PASTURE: Fânețe : hay meadow; Fâ.Mărunțișenilor+ ; C.Stânei# ; Vf.Stâni# ; DI/V.Stupinei# ; În Stupini : in the apiary;
FARMS/ESTATES: La Berhuleasa+ ; La Cârlig+ ; I/Mu.Chiliei/V.Chiliilor+ ; Pd.Chiliile Schitului+ ; În/Pe Crant+ ; Pe Fâșii/Fâșii : on the strip/parcel; La Potop/La Nule al lui Potop+ ; La Stoenеști+ ; Streaua+ .
DEFORESTATION: Pn.Albului+ ; În Laz/Sub Laz : at/below the ‘recently’ deforested land; Mu.Lazului# ; V. Lazului# ; Poienița : small clearing; DL.Seciu# ; G.Seciu : the hollow on Seciu hill after deforestation by ‘secuire’; Pn.Ulmului : elm clearing.
ASPECT: F.Cârnului : Cârnău’s south-facing slope; Ds.Muscelului+ ; F.Muscelului+ .
WATER SOURCES: I.Bâlcii+ ; I.Ciuciurului : spring spurting noisily from a pipe; I.Cuculeștilor +: Cuculești spring; I.Glodului/Sărat : mud spring; Lacu-al Mare : large lake; L.-al Mare : great lake; Murătoarea : very salty water for pickling; I.Nițului+ ; I.Pâslarilor : Pâslari spring; V.Roghina/ La Roghini# ; I.Saramura : salt water; I.Satului : village spring; G.Ștubului# ; I.La Uluce : at the groove (large spring); La Vână : at the spring.
OTHERS: La Ciumați : at the burial place; La Cruce : at the cross; Crucioiu : large cross; Cr.Mățării : at the cross of Mățara; I.Pâslarilor+ ; Pâcle : mud spring with mineral oil; La Puțuri : at the wells; La Releu : at the TV relay mast; La Troiță : at the wayside crucifix.

meanings given in Table 3. + meanings given elsewhere in Table 4. For a key to the feature abbreviations see Table 3.

However most landscape transformation has occurred through farming which generates many references to estates or individual farms. We have La Berhuleasa (‘at Berhuleasa’s land’) recalling an old farm on mature landslides near Tega which (as already noted) has now been divided into a building site for the hamlet of Poduri and

open ground known as Fânețe. La Cârlig 'at Hook's place' is remembered at Tega, while În/Pe Cranț concerns a farm at Măguricea. H.Sibiești refers to the boundary of Sibiești's land (although the location has been forgotten) while La Stoenеști means 'on the land of the Stoenеști family' near Măguricea: a typically 'waved' landslide surface where former arable land is now used for hay and pasture. Meanwhile La Nule al lui Potop (or simply La Potop) – a name conveying a sense of flood – is an old farm in the Zaharești area below Dl.Malului on old landslides where a former cropping regime is now reduced to fruit growing and haymaking Streaua recalls an old farm on a hill east of Cuculești while Pe Fâsii is another location at Zaharești meaning literally 'on the strip or parcel'. As regards farming practice, great importance attaches to aspect, especially on the higher ground where it is common to see names highlighting the north- and south-facing slopes: hence for example F.Cârului with relatively good potential justifying woodland clearance as opposed to Ds.Muscelului – the north-facing hillslope of Muscelu-Țigan – which is a wooded area on the north side of a rocky crest near Gâ.Plășorului. The legacy of cropping on the higher ground produces the interesting case of V.Mălae Mici: a reference to maize used in 1892 by Iorgulescu with respect to cultivation in the old Mărunțișu commune which extended to the eastern side of the Buzău river. The name of the valley is no longer recognised but fortunately he also mentioned Dl/Ma.Spoelii and the small stream that flowed from this source area towards the Buzău; pointing to a location close to Zaharești.

Strangely however although the locals are aware of the tradition of maize growing on the higher landslide surface they use the enigmatic term 'mălaia' which (strictly) has no meaning in Romanian, though it is known as the name of a hill elsewhere in Buzău county. Furthermore they insist that this latter term in authentic and that Iorgulescu version is misconceived. Hence we have two contrasting references to former cereal cultivation: 'mălae' and 'mălaia', though some specialists (quite apart from the locals) would consider 'mălaia' an acceptable derivation of 'mălai'. Meanwhile cereal growing on the higher ground is also indicated less controversially by knowledge of former threshing places or 'arie' e.g. La Arie pe Muchia at Râpile. Another case concerns the farmer Mitu Pavel on land above Zaharești near the TV relay station: 'La Arie lui Mitu Pavel'. There are also references to an apiary at Zaharești linked with the Vărbila monastery's hermitage or 'schit' at Mănăstirea: these refer to Dl.Stupinei (hill of the beehive); V.Stupinei (apiary valley) and În Stupini: 'in the apiary' relating to the precise location of the apiary one kilometer east of Zaharești on a large area of undulating land near the summit west of Ma.Mare. Indeed this proven case of association with Vărbila monastery could provide some credibility for the reference to I.Chiliei already noted in connection with hermitage cells although these cells would relate to a period much earlier than a nineteenth century monastic estate. Finally La Vii ('at the vineyard') recalls former vine growing northeast of Zaharești where there is now only scrubby pasture. And in connection with lower levels of intensification today on former arable land 'Fânețe' is

a reference to haymaking on land once acceptable as ‘țarina’. There are several references to sheep farming: I.Odăii near Râpile is the spring or brook of the ‘odaie’: a sheep farm; while Sn.Coceneștilor is the sheepfold of the Cocenești i.e. the Cocenescu family at Măguricea. The word ‘stâna’ (sheepfold) appears through C.Stânei – the slope of the sheepfold – located well to the east of Zaharești; and also Vf.Stânei which is the peak of the sheepfold at Măguricea.

Water supplies are obviously important. Names springs include I.Ciuciurului: suggesting a strong spring where the spurting of water (as though it were pouring out of a pipe) makes a distinct sound. G.Ștubului points to a hollow with a fountain derived from a ‘ștubeu’ i.e. a spring in a hollow tree, while the simple reference to a spring: La Vână (‘at the spring’) may be made more specific by links with a family e.g. I.Nițului (Nițu’s spring) near Măguricea, or a settlement: e.g. I.Satului (the village spring) at Râpile, or specifically salt water: e.g. I.Saramura (salt water spring) known at both Măguricea and Râpile. Although ‘bad news’ for watering livestock (and land quality generally) salt water was important for pickling and local sources would therefore be highlighted. Meanwhile, there are few references to handicrafts although in the case of I.Pâslarilor – meaning ‘Pâslari spring’: the name for one of the neighbourhoods of Râpile with a derivation from ‘pâslă’ which is a woollen material thickened after fulling – there is no evidence of such work ever being undertaken in the locality. Meanwhile La Puțuri (‘at the wells’) refers to former oil wells near Tega which had brief commercial status and Pâcle (a mineral oil spring) is also known as I.Sărat (salt spring) and I.Glodului (mud spring) at Tega. As regards local infrastructure and services, there are no direct references to the road system apart from V.Carului as the valley of the cart at Măguricea, but there are a number of wayside crosses: ‘La Cruce’ refers to a cross standing near the trackway from Măguricea leading down to Zaharești; while Crucioiu stands on high ground at Ma.Dârstei and Cr.Mătării stands on the route from Predeal to Muscelu Cărmănești and La Troiță is very close to Măguricea. La Releu (‘at the TV relay mast: ‘releu’) is an alternative name for În Laz north of Zaharești

V. CONCLUSION

The paper has outlined the settlement history and toponymy of a section of the Pătârlagele Depression comprising the eastern side of the Buzău river which includes the earliest settlement known in the district (Cârnu monastery) and a number of others (Râpile, Tega and Zaharești) which form part of the primary network. Cârnu provides evidence of the early exploitation of the higher ground although it does not support of the theory that the Subcarpathians were important for security during the migration period. There is however evidence of growing population pressure on the higher ground during the nineteenth century which saw a polarisation between capitalist farming on the river terraces and subsistence agriculture on the landslides and structural surfaces. At a time when official

records of settlement are relatively limited it is useful to find that the toponymy from both documentary and oral source is able to reflect both the physical features and agricultural development in terms of farms and farm enterprises including the expansion of cereal cultivation on the higher ground.

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